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# Farm Broadcasters Letter



Letter No. 2207

April 4, 1985

**BLOCK ON  
CARGO  
PREFERENCE  
ACT**

On April 3, Sec'y of Agriculture John Block announced the Administration's support for the goals of legislation introduced by Senators Nickles, Boschwitz and Boren, and Congressmen Roberts and English, and Congresswoman Smith and others. These bills would provide that commercial export activities of the Commodity Credit Corporation and the Department of Agriculture, including the blended credit program, would not have to meet requirements of the Cargo Preference Act. At least 50 pct. of the cargo shipped under programs to which this act applies must be transported on privately owned U.S.-flag vessels. According to Block, this Administration believes in a strong U.S. merchant marine. Yet, support of the maritime industry should not be to the detriment of U.S. agricultural exports.

**NEW START  
PA. CHICKENS**

Federal avian influenza surveillance activities in Pennsylvania officially ended on April 2, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. During the 11-month eradication effort, more than 17 million birds in 452 flocks were destroyed, primarily in Pa. and Va. Federal indemnities totaled \$41.9 million, with an additional \$22.6 million in support costs, bringing the total cost of eradication to \$64.5 million. If the disease had become widespread on the East Coast, and there were no Federal eradication program, consumers would have had to pay approximately \$2.2 billion more for reduced quantities of poultry products during that time.

**ADDITIONAL  
DEFICIENCY  
PAYMENTS**

Eligible corn and sorghum producers will receive an estimated \$1.7 billion in deficiency payments from their 1984 crop, according to Sec'y of Agriculture John Block. Most of the 760,000 deficiency payment checks should be in farmers' hands between April 10 and 15. Corn producers will receive about \$1.55 billion and sorghum producers around \$150 million. Payments will be issued through local ASCS offices.

**MILK SUPPORT  
PRICE LOWERED**

The national support price for milk was reduced from \$12.60 to \$12.10 per hundredweight on April 1, according to Sec'y of Agriculture, John Block. The \$.50 per hundredweight deduction from the proceeds of all milk marketed for commercial use by producers ended on Mar. 31. Said Block, "We have determined that the new support price will assure an adequate supply of wholesome milk to meet current needs. It is our hope that this adjustment will bring supply and demand into a better balance."

PRICES REC.  
INDEX DOWN  
1 POINT

The March all farm products Index of Prices received by farmers decreased 1 point (0.7 pct.) from Feb. to 134 pct. of its Jan.-Dec. 1977 average, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Lower prices for hogs, cattle, oranges, milk and wheat were partially offset by higher prices for tomatoes, eggs, cotton, potatoes and sorghum. The index was 11 points (7.6 pct.) below a year ago.

PRICES PAID  
INDEX  
UNCHANGED

The Index of Prices paid by farmers for commodities and services, interest, taxes and farm wage rates for March was 164 pct. of its 1977 average, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The index was unchanged from a month earlier and a year ago. Increases from last month in the fuels and energy and family living indexes were offset by decreases in feed, fertilizer and farm machinery components.

WEST WET  
ENOUGH

The water supply in the West is expected to be adequate this year even though precipitation has been well below normal in many parts of the region, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Precipitation ranged from below normal in Calif. and over much of Montana, Wyoming, Great Basin, Colorado Basin and Upper Missouri Basin to above normal in southeastern Oregon and south-central Idaho during February. But the amount of water stored in western reservoirs remained excellent except in Montana, where reservoir storage is below normal.

TOBACCO  
COMMITTEE  
TO MEET

The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports the National Advisory Committee for Tobacco Inspection Services will hold a public meeting at 10 a.m., Tuesday, April 23, at the Ramada Inn, 525 Waller Ave., Lexington, Ky. Anyone wishing to speak before the group should contact the Tobacco Division, Room 502, Annex, AMS, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Or phone (202) 447-2567.

EMERGENCY  
LOANS TO  
FLORIDA

Sec'y of Agriculture John Block named 9 counties in Florida as eligible for Farmers Home Admin. emergency loans because of losses due to a severe freeze on Jan. 20-21. Five contiguous counties also are eligible.

SEE SPUD RUN

Effective April 3, an additional area of upstate New York will be included under Federal regulations to prevent the spread of the golden nematode, a destructive pest of potato crops, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Monitoring indicates the nematode has spread beyond its former boundaries in upstate New York, so part of Livingston County, N.Y. was added to areas already regulated.

NO QUOTA  
TRIGGER  
IN '85

According to Sec'y of Agriculture John Block, the second quarterly estimate of U.S. meat imports for 1985 is below the level that would require quotas on imports under the Meat Import Act of 1979. Based on USDA estimates of available supplies, imports of beef and certain other meats should be no more than 1 billion, 200 million pounds, about 119 million below the 1985 trigger level.

CCC INTEREST  
RATE - 9-3/4%

Commodity loans disbursed in April by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation will carry a 9-3/4 pct. interest rate. The new rate is up from 9-1/8 pct.

FROM OUR  
TELEVISION  
SERVICE

"North American & Oceania Outlook"...The U.S. Department of Agriculture predicts another year of large production for farmers in North America and Oceania. USDA economist Allen Johnson focuses on factors contributing to this situation. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (351)

"Livestock Sales to China"...Breeding cattle from the United States are on their way to China for the first time in history. Dale Miller with USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service discusses the implications behind this agreement. Jim Johnson interviews. (352)

"Changing Technologies in Agriculture"...Michael Phillips of the Office of Technology Assessment comments on a report released by this office describing how new technologies have contributed to a shift in agricultural systems. Jim Johnson interviews. (353)

"Florida Citrus Crop"...Fred Crosby, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), takes a look at the series of deep freezes in Florida, and their affect on the citrus industry there. Vic Powell interviews. (354)

"Confinement Livestock Buildings"...Respiratory problems and flu-like symptoms often result from working in confinement livestock buildings. Pete Knapp, Iowa State University, focuses on reasons behind this problem. Gary Beaumont interviews. (355)

SUSPEND  
SUGAR IMPORT  
FEE

Sec'y of Agriculture John Block suspended the import fees on raw sugar and imposed a 1-cent per pound import fee on refined sugar. The suspension is effective pending investigation and recommendations by the U.S. International Trade Commission. President Reagan has signed a proclamation that suspends the fee. According to Block, the reason for ending the adjustable fee system is that, under present market conditions, the system would be counter-productive to the sugar price support program it is intended to protect.

1984 WOOL &  
MOHAIR  
PAYMENTS

Sheep producers will receive about \$90 million in Federal incentive payments on wool and lambs they sold in 1984, while mohair producers will receive about \$10 million, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The 1984 national average market price for shorn wool was 79.5 cents a pound, 85.5 cents less than the \$1.65 per pound support price. Dividing the difference--85.5 cents--by the average market price--79.5 cents--results in a 1984 payment rate of 107.5 pct., compared with a payment of 149.6 pct. in 1983.

HEARING ON  
ANIMAL EMBRYOS  
IMPORTS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture will conduct a public hearing on its recent proposal to establish import regulations for livestock embryos beginning at 10 a.m., Wed., May 15, at the Airport Sheraton Inn, 7301 Northwest Tiffany Springs Road, Kansas City, Mo. The purpose of the meeting is to receive comments from the livestock industry and animal health officials on how best to utilize existing technology for collecting and preserving embryos. Comments also requested on establishing safeguards against introduction of foreign animal diseases such as foot-and-mouth and rinderpest. If you wish to speak on the issue, preregister with the presiding officer at the hearing location between 9 and 10 a.m. on May 15.



OFF MIKE

Talked with Tom Hoy (Nat'l Rural Elec. Coop, Washington, D.C.) about this summer's NAFB meeting here in the Capital City. Tom called to set up another meeting of the program committee, and we talked a bit about what already has been firmed up. All I can say is, "Lookin' good!" You'll be getting information about the meeting soon as you can start making plans to attend. It will be worth it, believe me ...

Jack Towers (former head of USDA Radio, now retired) and his wife Rhoda are about ready to leave for Sweden to visit with Benny Aasland, who is the world's top expert on Duke Ellington. Jack is taking along some recorded material that's only been heard by about 20 people in the world. Jack is an expert on Ellington in his own right. From Sweden, Jack and Rhoda will go to England for the third annual Duke Ellington conference where Jack will present the story of recording Ellington in Fargo, ND, in 1940 ... An update on the goings-on of Fortunato "Lucky" Teho (former Univ. of Hawaii radio/TV specialist). The mayor of Honolulu appointed Lucky to the Arborist Advisory Commission. And along about that same time, the Kohala High School FFA Chapter picked Lucky to be the Grand Marshal for the Chapter's 11th annual grand parade leading up to the big Open Market event. It all sounded quite colorful, and our congratulations to Lucky! ...

Derry Brownfield (Brownfield Network, Centertown, MO) is this year's Mid-America Dairymen's outstanding farm communicator. The award was presented at the 17th annual Mid-Am delegates' meeting, April 3-4 ... This time it's not a "freebee," but if you would like a copy of the 1984 Handbook of Agricultural Charts, they are for sale through the U.S. Government Printing office, Washington, D.C. 20402 for \$3.75 each. If you've worked with the chartbook before, you know they are well worth the money. Lots of good information.

FROM OUR RADIO  
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1453...(Weekly 13½ min. documentary) Little is known about the efforts of Extension to help farmers cope with their financial plight. Gary Crawford talks with extension officials about their efforts to assist farmers.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1442...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; Cargo preference; Dairy price support changes; Helping farmers at risk; Llama, a new farm animal.

CONSUMER TIME #935...(Weekly reel of five 2½-3 min features) Students and food safety; National Consumers Week, Turkey...a popular bird; A bear for punishment; African visions.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Fri, April 12, Middle East & North Africa crop production, Turkey Hatchery; Mon, April 15, Cotton & wool, Production & income; Tues, April 16, Weekly crop & weather summary, Milk production, Foreign ag trade of U.S.; Wed, April 17, Agricultural outlook. Dial the USDA National News Lines 202/488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. EST each working day.



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